

Remarks

Reconsideration and withdrawal of the objections and rejections set forth in the above-mentioned Official Action in view of the foregoing amendments and the following remarks are respectfully requested.

Claims 1-11 are now pending in the application, with Claim 1 being independent. Claims 1-10 have been amended and Claim 11 has been added herein.

The Examiner requested that Fig. 6 be labelled --Prior Art--. In the accompanying Letter Transmitting Corrected Formal Drawings, Fig. 6, as well as Fig. 7, have been so labelled. Favorable consideration and withdrawal of the objection to the drawings are requested.

The disclosure was objected to for not citing the document listed at page 3, line 20 in an Information Disclosure Statement. It should be noted that the number of that listed publication had a typographical error in the original specification. The typographical error has been corrected in the accompanying substitute specification and the correct document is cited in an accompanying Supplemental Information Disclosure Statement. Reconsideration and withdrawal of the objection to the disclosure and consideration of the newly-cited document are requested.

Claims 1, 2, 4 and 5 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102 as being anticipated by Japanese Laid-Open Patent Application No. 7-325444 (Motohashi). Claims 1-3 and 6-10 were rejected under § 102 as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 5,140,369 (Haneda et al.). These rejections are respectfully traversed.

As is recited in independent Claim 1, the present invention relates to an image forming apparatus including an image carrier for carrying an image, an intermediate transfer body to which the image on the image carrier is transferred, transfer material conveying means for conveying a transfer material along a conveyance route, transfer means for transferring the image on the intermediate transfer body onto the transfer material conveyed by the transfer material conveying means, a delivery portion for delivering the transfer material on which the image is transferred, a first openable portion which is openable with respect to an apparatus body, the first openable portion holding the intermediate transfer body and the delivery portion, and a second openable portion which is openable to expose the conveyance route. One of the first openable portion and the second openable portion is disposed on a side face of the apparatus body and the other thereof is disposed on an upper surface of the apparatus body. The openable portion on the upper surface can be opened in a state that the openable portion on the side face is closed.

With the above arrangement, because the openable portion on the upper surface of the apparatus body can be opened in a state that the openable portion on the side face is closed, an operator can closely approach the apparatus to access the interior of the apparatus body when the top openable portion is open and the side openable portion is closed. Note Fig. 4, for example. That is, if the side openable portion was open (such as in Fig. 3) when the top openable portion was opened, the operator could not approach the apparatus as closely from the front because the side openable portion would be in the way.

Motohashi relates to an electrophotographic printer having two covers: a cover 45 for exposing a paper carrying path 18, and a cover 55. However, Applicant

submits that covers 45 and 55 are opened at the same time for maintenance of the apparatus. Applicants respectfully submit that Motohashi does not clearly describe a relationship between the disposition and movement of cover 55 relative to cover 45.

Therefore, Motohashi fails to disclose or suggest at least that one of the openable portions is disposed on a side face of the apparatus body and the other is disposed on an upper surface of the apparatus body, and the openable portion on the upper surface can be opened in a state that the openable portion on the side face is closed, as is recited in independent Claim 1.

Thus, Motohashi fails to disclose or suggest important features of the present invention recited in independent Claim 1.

Haneda et al. describes a color image forming apparatus including a delivery portion or tray 20 pivotable about hinge 160 and a side cover 50 (Fig. 6), 163 (Fig. 10) or 161 (Fig. 16). However, neither the delivery portion nor any side cover is believed to hold an intermediate transfer body, such as photoreceptor belt 1. Further, Applicant submits that the upper portion must be opened in order to open the side cover and they must be handled together. Note, for example, col. 17, lines 2-10.

Accordingly, Haneda et al. fails to disclose or suggest at least a first openable portion holding an intermediate transfer body and a delivery portion, as is recited in independent Claim 1. Haneda et al. also fails to disclose or suggest that one openable portion is disposed on a side face of an apparatus body and another is disposed on an upper surface of the apparatus body, and the openable portion on the upper surface can be opened

in a state that the openable portion on the side face is closed, as is recited in independent Claim 1.

Thus, Haneda et al. also fails to disclose or suggest important features of the present invention recited in independent Claim 1.

Thus, independent Claim 1 is patentable over the citations of record.

Reconsideration and withdrawal of the § 102 rejections are respectfully requested.

For the foregoing reasons, Applicant respectfully submits that the present invention is patentably defined by independent Claim 1. Dependent Claims 2-11 are also allowable, in their own right, for defining features of the present invention in addition to those recited in their respective independent claims. Individual consideration of the dependent claims is requested.

Applicant submits that the present application is in condition for allowance. Favorable reconsideration, withdrawal of the objections and rejections set forth in the above-noted Office Action, and an early Notice of Allowability are requested.

Applicant's undersigned attorney may be reached in our Washington, D.C. office by telephone at (202) 530-1010. All correspondence should continue to be directed to our below-listed address.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Mark A. Williamson", written over a horizontal line.

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